



# Artwork of Armed Conflict

## What it is

Artwork of Armed Conflict is an activity that displays artwork around your city or school to bring awareness to some of the many important humanitarian issues that result from armed conflict. The artwork can be in the form of posters, maps, murals, or large drawings but should be educational in nature, respectful, and in alignment with the Red Cross' Seven Fundamental Principles. Artwork can be used to create public awareness for any topic related to armed conflict and international humanitarian law (IHL), like child soldiers, refugees, health care workers, and issues of gender.

## How it helps

Current armed conflicts affect the lives of 1.5 billion people around the world. It is crucial, now more than ever, that the next generation of civic and government leaders know and understand the importance of IHL. The American Red Cross educates the public about IHL regarding the protections for civilians and the rules setting limits on war. Knowledge and awareness about IHL helps create young people who are engaged global citizens who understand humanitarian issues that arise from armed conflict. Through Artwork for Armed Conflict, you are raising awareness of IHL by creatively educating your peers and communities about important humanitarian issues!

## Get started

Before beginning your activity, contact your Red Cross Chapter for assistance. You can search for the chapter by using your zip code on [redcross.org](http://redcross.org). When you call, ask to speak with someone that works with youth volunteers. They will be able to guide you to available resources that can make this an impactful and successful event. Once you have established contact with your chapter, there are three steps you should complete to begin:

1. Talk to your school to acquire permission to make and display your art project.
2. Gather a group of volunteers committed to working on the project, and collect the necessary supplies. You will need poster board or a blank canvas, paintbrushes, paint, and other art supplies. Be sure to talk to your volunteers about how much time you expect it will take to make and display the project.

Want more information?  
Email us!

[IHLYouth@redcross.org](mailto:IHLYouth@redcross.org) for more ideas and materials for this and other IHL activities.

## Special Thanks

Special thanks to the [IHL Action Campaign Team](#) from the American Red Cross serving the Greater Cincinnati-Dayton Region for developing this idea.

## DID YOU KNOW?

In the last 13 years, the use of child soldiers has spread to almost every region of the world and every armed conflict. Though an exact number is impossible to define, it is estimated that approximately 300,000 children are believed to be combatants in some thirty conflicts worldwide.

3. Decide as a group what story you want your artwork to tell and why you want to tell that story. Explore the information in the Resources section to learn more about IHL and humanitarian issues.

### *What's next?*

- Design your art project based on the topic you have chosen to depict, and then begin painting!
  - For example, if your topic is Child Soldiers: Use information on child soldiers from Red Cross, ICRC, and other sources to create a map of the world. Paint countries where there have been conflicts that used child soldiers in the past three years in a bold color so they stand out.
  - Interested in another topic? Check out the Resources section below to learn about other humanitarian issues such as refugees, safety of women and girls, and health.
- Display your artwork around your city or school for at least one week. Use this opportunity to talk with your peers about what you learned when creating the project. Distribute flyers to your classmates and talk to teachers about presenting your art in their classes.
- Advertise your work! Take photos, post on social media, and write blog posts. Send photos, blog posts, and more to [IHLyouth@redcross.org](mailto:IHLyouth@redcross.org).

Now that you have completed these steps and organized a successful Artwork of Armed Conflict, continue to spread knowledge of IHL and the rules of war to young people! Follow [@HumanityinWar](https://twitter.com/HumanityinWar) on Twitter and tweet using #warhaslimits to follow up with participants and get more people involved in future Red Cross activities.

### Shake it up!

- » Use these pieces of art as part of a larger campaign on your chosen topic to help you teach others about IHL and important humanitarian issues.
- » Take your paintings to another school or location in your area and display them there. Consider rotating between several different locations over the course of a few weeks.
- » Ask the art classes at your school to support your Artwork in Armed Conflict project.

### Show and Tell

- » Use photos from your event to promote your next Red Cross Activity on social media.
- » Write a short blog post to share with [IHLYouth@redcross.org](mailto:IHLYouth@redcross.org), along with some of your photos, and we'll post it on [humanityinwarblog.com](http://humanityinwarblog.com).

### Resources

- » Child Soldiers: [ICRC](#), [Child Soldiers International](#), [Human Rights Watch](#)
- » Refugees: [UNHCR](#), [ICRC](#), [Refugee International](#)
- » Gender: [ICRC](#), [UN Women](#)
- » Health Care Workers: [ICRC](#), [Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition](#)